

3/10/0719/FP - Two storey side extension with rear dormer at 3 Thorley High, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 4AR for Mr S Horspool

Date of Receipt: 21.04.2010

Type: Full - Other

Parish: THORLEY

Ward: BISHOPS STORTFORD - SOUTH

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:-

1. Three Year Time Limit (1T121)

Directive

1. You are advised that the proposed window opening within the northern elevation of the original house as shown on the approved plans may only be installed as "permitted development" under Class A to Part of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) provided that it is obscure glazed and non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies GBC1, ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and the decision within LPA reference 3/06/2085/FP is that permission should be granted.

_____ (071910FP.MP)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The property is detached with yellow/cream render and yellow bricks. It is unusual in design and features a large, quite dominant chimney stack on the front elevation. The property is sited on the southern outskirts of Bishops Stortford within a small cluster of dwellings in Thorley.

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1.2 The proposed extensions follow a similar size and scale to a previous permission granted in 2006 which has not been implemented. The proposal extends to the side elevation of the property at two storey to a width of 4.4 metres. The extension runs flush with the two storey front building line, albeit with a reduced ridge height. The two storey element projects to the rear but allows a modest 500mm set back from the rear building line. Also proposed are single storey front and rear extensions. The proposed extensions amount to an approximate cumulative floor area increase in the original size of the dwelling of 80%. It is for this reason that the application has been referred to the committee for a decision.

2.0 Site History

2.1 The relevant planning history to the site is as follows:-

- Planning permission was granted within LPA reference 3/1198/74 for the provision of single storey extensions to the dwelling.
- Planning permission was later granted within LPA reference 3/74/1371/FP for a first floor extension over those previously approved ground floor extensions.
- The most recent permission relates to LPA reference 3/06/2085/FP, in which planning permission was granted for a two storey side extension. The cumulative impact of that permission and previous extensions to the original property resulted in an overall increase of 66%. However, that permission has not been implemented.

3.0 Consultation Responses

3.1 No consultation responses have been received

4.0 Town/Parish Council Representations

4.1 Thorley Parish Council do not object to the application but comment that the side window facing no. 2 Thorley Hill should be obscure glazed.

4.2 Bishop's Stortford Town council have no objection to the proposal.

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 No representations have been received as a result.

6.0 Policy

6.1 The relevant Local Plan policies in this application include the following:-

SD2	Settlement Hierarchy
GBC1	Appropriate Development in the Green Belt
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV5	Extensions to Dwellings
ENV6	Extensions to Dwellings – Criteria

7.0 Considerations

Principle of development

- 7.1 As the site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, the principle of development is assessed under policy GBC1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. Under part (d) of this policy, consideration is given as to whether this proposed extension can be considered as “limited” and whether it accords with the criteria of policy ENV5. The principle objective of this policy is to limit the impact an extension may have on the character and appearance of an existing dwelling, both in itself and in relation to any adjoining dwelling and on the appearance of the locality. Whilst the principle of extending a dwelling is generally acceptable, the main concern lies with the effect of extensions on the general maintenance of a supply of smaller dwellings outside of the main towns and settlements, and also with the cumulative impact of development in the countryside. This concern is highlighted in government planning policy guidance on Green Belts (PPG2) which indicates that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness and that extensions should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- 7.2 It is Officers opinion that in creating an 80% increase of floor area over that of the original dwelling (that predating 1948) this proposal cannot be considered as “limited” and is therefore contrary to policy unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that clearly outweigh the harm by reason of appropriateness. PPG2 describes that very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In this case Officers consider that due weight should be given to how the proposed development relates to previously approved extensions to the dwelling and how the proposals within this application would impact upon the openness and character of the surrounding area of Green Belt.

Impact on surrounding area/amenity

- 7.3 The proposed extension to the side is similar in size, scale, form and design to the previous approval. One of the main differences relates to the provision of a window on the frontage as opposed to a rendered section. In Officers opinion the proposed extension from the frontage appears to offer an appropriate degree of subservience to the dwelling and spacing to the boundary such that the proposal will not result in a significantly detrimental impact on the street scene, or the openness of the locality.
- 7.4 The more significant difference to the approval in 2006 and, which provides the additional floor area increase to the property, (which tips the proposed extensions over the requirement for 'limited extensions' in the Green Belt), relates to the degree of projection of the extension to the rear. The previous 2006 application proposed an extension to the side of the property which projected 4.5 metres back from the front building line. The proposal now before members extends 6.5 metres back from the front building line with a 500mm gap to the rear wall of the property. An additional 1.7 metre ground floor extension is also proposed to the rear of the two storey side element.
- 7.5 However, this element of the scheme remains in proportion and well consolidated in relation to the principle dwelling, in Officers opinion. In this respect, the impact on the openness and rural character of the site is not considered to be significantly harmful. Furthermore, in Officers opinion, the proposed extension to the rear is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the dwelling, in accordance with policy ENV5.

Neighbour amenity considerations

- 7.6 Officers note the comments from Thorley Parish Council. However, the proposed window opening serving the ensuite on the first floor north elevation does not require planning permission and is not therefore part of this application. In order to constitute "permitted development" however, the window is, in any event, required to be obscure glazed. A directive is therefore suggested in order to clarify this and to bring it to the attention of the applicant.

Conditions

- 7.7 The proposed plans indicate materials of construction which Officers consider are appropriate to the context of the building; accordingly, no conditions relating to this issue are required.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Officers consider that the amount of development proposed cannot be considered as 'limited', and is therefore contrary to policy GBC1 of the Local Plan, unless very special circumstances indicate otherwise. However, as this extension will not result in significantly harmful extension that would not result in significant harm to the character, appearance or openness of the Green Belt, Officers are satisfied that such very special circumstances exist in this case. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the conditions suggested at the head of this report.